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Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Education Newsletter

October 1999 Issue 2

Upcoming Workshops & Conferences:

Snowmobile Instructor's Training
Contact 444-4585
December 4-5
Georgetown Lake Lodge, MT

Predator Symposium
Contact 444-4041
January 8th
Billings, MT

"Wild About Bats" Workshop
Contact 454-5844
January 27-28
FWP Office, Gt. Falls, MT

Winter Outdoor Skills Workshop for Women
Contact 444-2615
February 18-20
The University of Montana's Lubrecht Experimental Forest.

Envirothon - Statewide Competition
Contact 443-5711
April 30-May 2
Lewistown, MT

BOW Instructor Retreat
Contact 444-2615
May 13-14
Ovando, MT

BOW Summer Workshops
Contact 444-2615
July 31-August 2 &
August 4-6
The University of Montana's Lubrecht Experimental Forest.

News from FWP

Letter from the Director

Dear FWP Partners,

Congress is considering legislation that is vital to the future of Fish, Wildlife & Parks. The Conservation and Reinvestment Act (CARA) would direct federal revenue from off-shore oil and gas leasing to the Land and Water Conservation Fund and create a program similar to Pittman-Robertson (which funds our wildlife programs–including hunter education) and Wallop-Bureaux (which funds our fisheries programs including aquatic education). CARA would provide funds for non-game and endangered species management and general wildlife conservation education. This bill would provide significant and secure funding in all program areas for FWP. Specific information about the bill is available on the web at www.teaming.com.

There are many reasons why Montana's citizens, including landowners, should support CARA. Here are a few reasons:

- By providing secure funding for non-game and endangered species conservation, CARA will enable the state to take proactive measures to retain state authority over management of resident wildlife species. Our experiences with grizzly bears, black-footed ferrets and bull trout provide clear evidence of the adverse impacts of federal control of wildlife species. The impacts to landowners of further federal intervention related to such species as prairie dogs or West-slope cutthroat trout would be substantial. CARA would reduce the threat of federal management.

- Montana is not immune from the trend toward increasing urbanization of our population. As more of our citizens lose their direct ties to the land, they lose the opportunities to learn about and experience the value of the fish and wildlife resources we manage. CARA will provide funding for conservation education efforts to help maintain awareness of fish and wildlife, the importance of habitat and responsible land stewardship that is vital to the health of both game and nongame species.

- By restoring funding to the Land and Water Conservation Fund, CARA will enable the state and local governments to provide more recreational lands and facilities. Our state and municipal parks and other recreational lands acquired and developed with LWCF dollars contribute to the quality of life for many Montanans. These areas provide locally accessible open space and facilities our citizens can use without having to travel great distances.

If these funds are not secured, the financial burden for wolf management, conserving open space, general education, and recreation will fall on users who already pay—hunters, anglers and parks visitors. If we are to secure these benefits of CARA, we must demonstrate to our congressional delegation that Montanans strongly endorse CARA. I encourage you to also contact friends, relatives and other constituents and ask them to add their voices to the support for CARA.

Not since the turn of the century, when Montana's citizens rose to the challenge of saving the rapidly disappearing populations of fish and wildlife has there been a greater need – or opportunity – for people to make a difference in conservation.

Thank you,
Patrick J. Graham

Patrick J. Graham, Director

Montana State Library
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Hunter, Bow Hunter & Trapper Education Programs

Starting with this autumn issue, a new column—*From the Field*—will feature stories from hunter education programs around the state. The idea is to use the newsletter as a vehicle for an exchange of ideas among groups on things that do and don't work in the classroom or the field course. Ideally, we'll keep the process of soliciting articles very informal by simply asking individuals whether they would be interested in contributing to a particular newsletter. For this issue, we approached Frank Boroni and Kelly Esquibel to share some of their experiences in working with youth hunter education in Butte/Silverbow county. *From the Field* will complement nicely our regular Helena column, now titled *From the Center*. Enjoy!

FROM THE CENTER

Conservation Education Division: A Recent Addition. Thomas Baumeister joined the Conservation Education Division in Helena as our new Hunter, Bowhunter, and Trapper Education Coordinator in July. Thomas comes to us with an extensive background in wildlife conservation and the history and ethic of the hunt. Most recently, he worked with the *Boone and Crockett Club* as a wildlife biologist and educator at the club's Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Ranch on the Rocky Mountain Front. He also worked as an instructor for *Orion-The Hunters Institute* college seminar on the history and ethic of the hunt. For the last two years, he served as a faculty member at the Blackfeet Community College in Browning. He graduated from MSU as well as UM. Thomas has called Montana his home for almost 10 years now and claims to have hunted, fished, and trapped many, if not most, of the beautiful habitats in the state. As a certified Master Hunter in Germany, he brings a unique perspective to our efforts in moving the hunting heritage into the 21st century. We are glad to have him on board. If you haven't met him already, give him a call some time.

Hunter Education: A Story of Continued Commitment. The class report forms are in and the statistics reveal an outstanding year for hunter education in Montana. Over 1,100 instructors delivered 332 courses between autumn of 1998 (182) and spring of 1999 (150); nearly 6,500 students enrolled. Volunteer instructors devoted more than 25,000 hours of their time to teach young hunters how to be safe, responsible, skillful, and ethical. Only 20 percent of those hours were actual classroom time, the remaining hours were required to prepare for classes, setting up field courses, securing community support, and raising funds. At 44 percent of the classes, students had the opportunity to actually live-fire, which complemented well the safe and responsible handling of firearms taught in every class. As these statistics confirm, the commitment by instructors toward the future of hunting is unparalleled in Montana and without their commitment hunter education would not be possible.

Instructor Survey Identifies Program Strengths and Weaknesses. A recent survey by Blaine Bradshaw, a University of Montana graduate student, reveals that Montana's hunter education instructors consider the program highly effective in meeting its objective of teaching firearm safety and hunting ethics/responsibility. Instructors regard the dedication and experience of instructors as the greatest asset to the program. Some of the most frequently listed weaknesses include insufficient classroom time, shortage of instructors, lack of a field course, and poor teaching aids. We took note of these survey findings and, combined with a forthcoming counterpart survey of students, we will make the necessary adjustments to continue program excellence. More on these survey findings and how we will address them will be presented in the next issue of this newsletter.

Hunter Education Program Needs Your Input. Next year, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks will add two courses to the education program: adult hunter education and remedial hunter education. The adult hunter education is designed for hunters who never enrolled in hunter education as well as those who have, but are interested in continuing education on topics such as conservation history, game care, landowner relationships, wildlife management and much more. As one individual put it, the course is designed to make good hunters better hunters. The remedial hunter education program, which was mandated by the 1999 legislature, will target specific violators of game laws by giving them a chance to improve their behavior prior to obtaining a license. In designing both of these courses, we would like to hear your thoughts and ideas. There are many issues that need to be addressed including instructor recruitment, curriculum development, and incentive programs. If you are interested in participating in this important effort, please contact Thomas Baumeister by phone (406) 444-4046 or email. tbaumeister@state.mt.us

FROM THE FIELD

Butte Hunter Education (BHE): Field Exercise. We've all heard it. "Experience is the best teacher." BHE has implemented this idea by having a Field Exercise (FE) at the Butte Gun Club's (BGC) Outdoor Range. The FE is presented after the class sessions. Failing the exam excludes students from the activity. Our FE requires students to demonstrate their knowledge. Here is how we do it. Ten students check in at the BGC at their flight times. The flight goes to Station One, the firing range. They shoot .22 caliber, bolt-action rifles at targets 25 yards away. You

Continued on page 3

Continued from Page 2

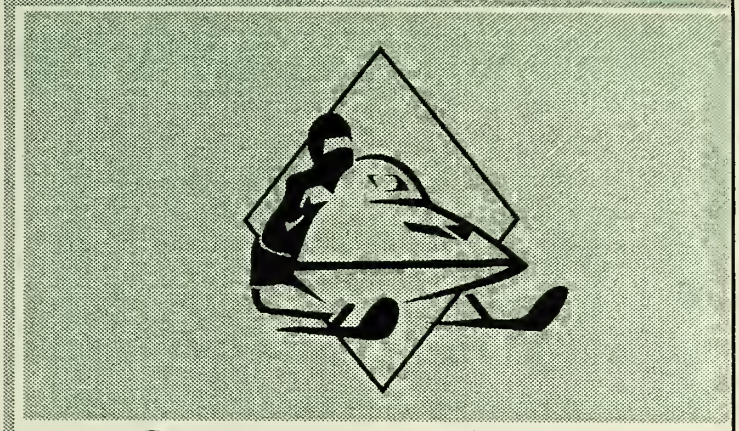
should see the excitement in the eyes when a student sees a Marlin Little Buckaroo (smaller than the standard .22) that is just his/her size or a left-handed rifle when he/she is left handed.

Butte Hunter Education (BHE): Field Exercise. At Station Two, the field hunt, students ask for written permission from rancher Smith to hunt on his land. Pairs of students then cross a four strand, barbwire fence. Forty yards over land they encounter a deer shoot/don't-shoot situation. They must explain their shooting decision. If they choose to shoot, they simulate firing at the deer, then cut out the tag issued to them during class. While walking single file down a gully, they show safe gun handling for their formation. At the bottom, students cross a real creek. Another shoot/don't-shoot situation arises with a deer on the horizon. Again they explain their shooting decision. Walking abreast, using proper gun handling, they individually cross another barbwire fence in a safe manner. At the Game Check Station, at the end of the hunt, students present their tags to our local game warden. Here, after a short discussion about the hunt, the game warden gives each successful student a certification card. This way students make a connection with our game warden. We hope this develops rapport between our game wardens and students.

Butte Hunter Ed Program: Field Exercise Safety. We call A-1 Ambulance in advance to tell them we are having our Field Exercise and where it is located. We make sure there is a cell phone at the Field Exercise for emergencies. We have four two-way radios so we can communicate during the Field Exercise. An instructor, at any given moment, can reach any other instructor or me. Currently, we have a small first-aid kit for emergency, but it is limited in content. We are working to buy one with more items. We keep a few latex gloves on hand to use in case of an accident. On the firing range, one adult supervises one student. Students fire live rounds at their target under this level of coaching. Past experience indicates one to one is the safest ratio for our live fire activity. We have one instructor prepare each flight of students for the live fire. The students pre-stage with the same model gun they will shoot. They must show that they can load, unload, site, and work the safety properly. We walk students through these activities using dummy ammunition, then explain the range rules and commands that will be used. We have safety glasses and earmuffs for each student. Our volunteers have to provide their own sight and hearing protection. We are working on getting reusable sets of safety glasses and hearing protection for our program so we can issue sets to each volunteer. Our local Wal-Mart store donated approximately 200 hunter orange vests for our field exercise. We issue these to students as needed. After every session, instructors clean and inspect guns. We look for visible damage and check to see what repairs may be needed.

Kelly Esquibel,
BSB Chief Hunter Education Instructor

Frank C. Boroni,
Editor



Snowmobile Education

What's up?

So what's up with the snowmobile education program you ask? A new office and additional duties, that's what!

Last winter FWP hired Ray Paige as the snowmobile education coordinator on a temporary basis. He quickly picked up the program, provided the needed materials and information to the volunteer instructors, trained new instructors, and made sure the program ran smoothly.

The snowmobile education coordinator position had a temporary status last season due to a proposal that went before the '99 Legislature. The proposal requested another part-time position to help with the snowmobile and OHV *trails* program administered by the Parks Division.

The Legislature gave FWP a half-time position for the motorized trails program, which will aid Bob Walker in managing the snowmobile and OHV trails grant programs. (In addition, the legislature also gave a half-time position to manage non-motorized trails.)

The end result is one full-time position that will manage both the snowmobile and OHV education programs (under the Conservation Education Division) and assist Bob Walker with the snowmobile and OHV trail grants programs (under the Parks Division).

For more information about this position contact Bob Walker at 444-4585.

Angler Education

The problem is how to bring about a striving for harmony with the land among a people many of whom have forgotten there is any such thing as land, among whom education culture have become almost synonymous with landlessness. This is the problem of "conservation education.'

-Aldo Leopold 1949

Fisheries Calendar

Watch your mailbox in late December for a special gift from FWP. We've produced a calendar which highlights the state and federal partnership in sport fish restoration, management, hatcheries, fishing access sites, and education. If you haven't received your copy by January, please drop us a note so we can get one on its way to you.

Federation of Fly Fishers Education Center

The Federation of Fly Fishers, a non profit group dedicated to conserving, restoring and educating through fly fishing, has opened several new displays in their International Education Center located in Livingston. These displays are centered upon warm water and cold water habitat rooms, where live fish displays are the focus of an important message about these resources.

The Federation also has two new faces at the education center to help handle the increased visitor load. Rab Cummings handles aquatic education programs and works with teachers, while Chris Marosek is responsible for the angler education program. Both Rab and Chris are also available on a limited basis for programs outside of the IEC. Give them a call at 406-222-9369 for more information.

One other new offering of the Education Center is its Fly Tackle Loaner Program. Any group in Montana can arrange to borrow, free of charge, fly fishing and fly tying tackle and supplies. For information - call Chris at 406-222-9369.

*M*A*Y Club*

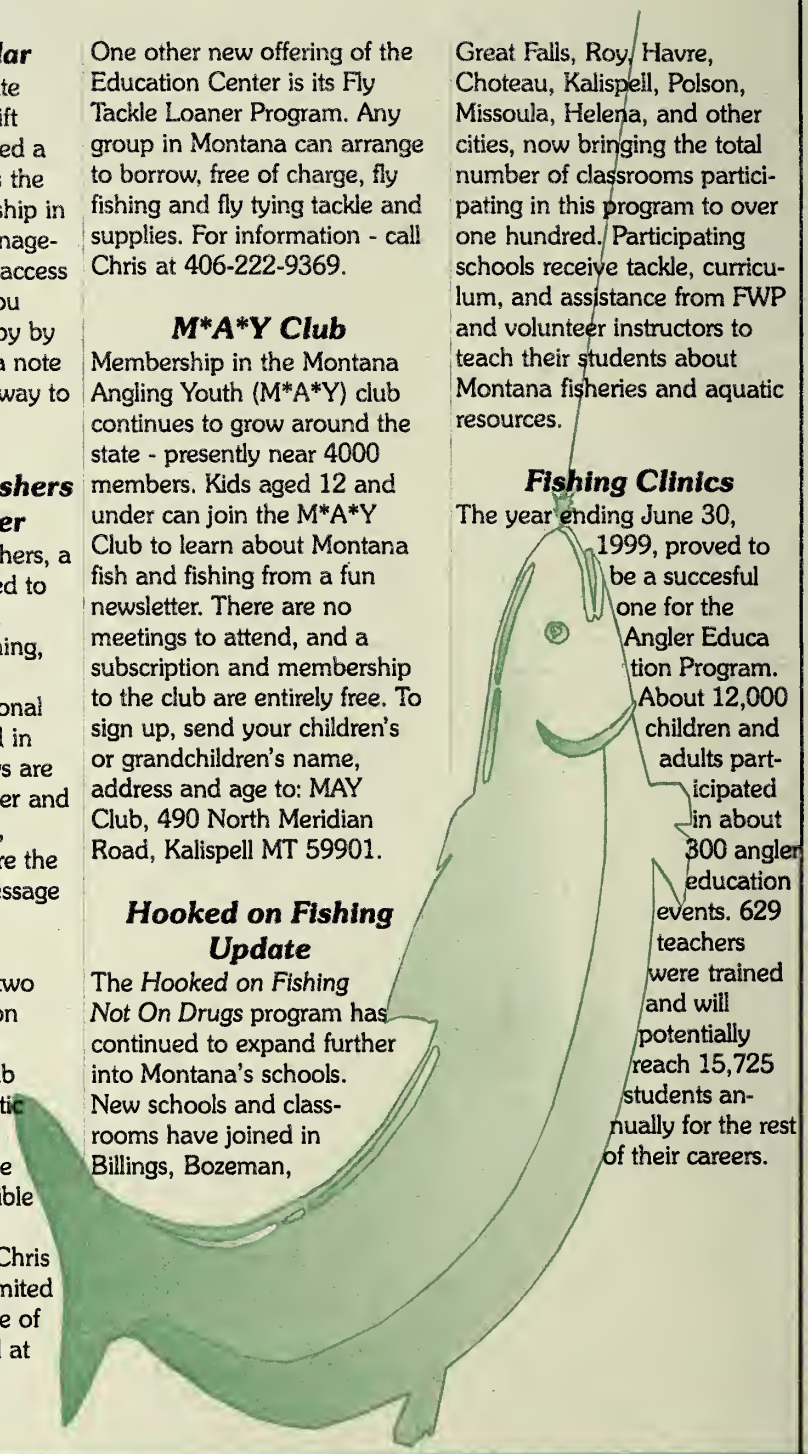
Membership in the Montana Angling Youth (M*A*Y) club continues to grow around the state - presently near 4000 members. Kids aged 12 and under can join the M*A*Y Club to learn about Montana fish and fishing from a fun newsletter. There are no meetings to attend, and a subscription and membership to the club are entirely free. To sign up, send your children's or grandchildren's name, address and age to: MAY Club, 490 North Meridian Road, Kalispell MT 59901.

Hooked on Fishing Update

The *Hooked on Fishing Not On Drugs* program has continued to expand further into Montana's schools. New schools and classrooms have joined in Billings, Bozeman, Great Falls, Roy, Havre, Choteau, Kalispell, Polson, Missoula, Helena, and other cities, now bringing the total number of classrooms participating in this program to over one hundred. Participating schools receive tackle, curriculum, and assistance from FWP and volunteer instructors to teach their students about Montana fisheries and aquatic resources.

Fishing Clinics

The year ending June 30, 1999, proved to be a succesful one for the Angler Education Program. About 12,000 children and adults participated in about 300 angler education events. 629 teachers were trained and will potentially reach 15,725 students annually for the rest of their careers.



Your purchase of fishing equipment and motorboat fuel supports aquatic education projects such as this newsletter.

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

SPORT FISH RESTORATION

Boating Safety Program

I scream! You scream! We all scream for ice cream!

There were some happy young boaters eating ice cream cones this summer — in fact 10,000 ice cream cones. FWP and the US Coast Guard Auxiliary teamed up with McDonald's to hand out coupons for a free ice cream cone to young boaters caught wearing their life jackets.

The McDonald's coupons were awarded to anyone 16 years of age and under found wearing a life jacket while boating. (Montana law required youth under 12 years of age to wear a life jacket.) Barry Cummings, Water Safety Officer for southwest Montana, enjoyed handing out the ice cream cone coupons. "This shows kids that we want to reward them for being safe," says Cummings. "The kids and the parents love it. Even when I had to write a ticket for a violation, the adults were grateful the kids received a coupon."

Wardens, Water Safety Officers and Auxiliary members handed out 10,000 coupons between Memorial Day and Labor Day. The coupons expire December 31 and are good at any McDonald's restaurant in Montana.

FREE Small Ice Cream Cone

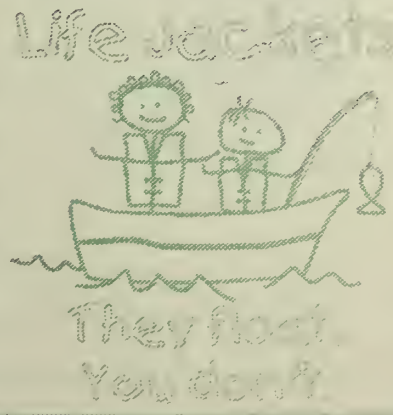
For any child (16 and under) wearing a life jacket during routine boating safety checks.

Valid at participating McDonald's in Montana
One coupon per child per visit.
Good thru December 31, 1999

Loaner Life Jackets Across the State

Have out-of-town guests you want to take boating? Arrive at the boat ramp and forgot little Billy's life jacket? Fear not— several marinas around the state now have youth size life jackets to loan free of charge.

A partnership between FWP, the US Coast Guard Auxiliary and the Montana Safe Kids Campaign obtained the life jackets through a grant from the Boat US Foundation. The grant provides each loaner site with a box filled with three different sizes of life jackets fitting children up to 90 pounds. Parents can check out a life jacket for their child and use it for the day or the weekend.



Youth under 12 years of age are required to wear a life jacket while boating. For youth it is critical that the life jacket fit properly. The jacket should fit snugly and not ride up above the ears. If it is too large it can easily slip off the child. Infants and toddlers should wear a Type II life jacket that has a crotch strap.

The loaner life jackets are available from Memorial Day through Labor Day at the following sites:

Bighorn Lake:
Ok-A-Beh Marina
Canyon Ferry Lake:
Kim's Marina & Resort
Yacht Basin
Clark Canyon Reservoir:
Hunter's Beaverhead Marina
Flathead Lake:
Kwataqnuk
Marina Cay Resort
Woods Bay Marina
Fort Peck:
Fort Peck Marina
Holter Lake:
BLM Campground
Gates of the Mountains
Log Gulch
Hauser Lake:
Lakeside Marina & Resort
Smith River:
Camp Baker
Spring Meadow Lake:
Spring Meadow State Park

HEY...SAFE BOATER KID!

McDonald's of Montana, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, and U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary say "Thanks" for thinking about safety. And remember

McDonald's

Life Jackets: They Float, You Don't.

1999 Accomplishments and Photo Album

becoming an Outdoors-Woman

February 19-21
Winter BOW
Lubrecht Forest

The first annual Beyond BOW Winter workshop was held in the snow covered Lubrecht Forest Camp. Twenty ladies took part in classes such as ice fishing, winter survival, snowshoeing, Nordic skiing and winter camping. *The next Winter BOW is February 18-20, 2000. Contact Liz Lodman.*

May 22-23
BOW Instructor Retreat
Diamond Bar X Ranch

The spectacular Rocky Mountain Front range was the site where BOW instructors gathered for a weekend of learning, sharing and planning. Instructors learned techniques to improve their classes and helped map a course to improve the Montana BOW program. *The next BOW Instructor's Retreat is May 13-14, 2000. Contact Liz Lodman.*

August 13-15
Becoming an Outdoors-Woman
Birch Creek

The 6th annual BOW workshop was held in the Pioneer Mountains north of Dillon. The workshop hosted 75 ladies who battled the elements (wind, rain, hail and heat) while putting their newly-learned skills to the test. *The next BOW Workshops are July 31- August 6, 2000. Contact Liz Lodman.*

June 18-20
Discover the Outdoors Camp
Beartooth Wildlife Management Area

The Montana Bow Hunter's Association and FWP teamed up to offer a weekend camp to single parents and their children. Nine family pairs learned about archery, fishing, outdoor survival, firearm safety, camping, and outdoor cooking. Funding provided by MBA and the Foundation for North American Wild Sheep enables the camp to be offered free of charge. *For information about the next Discover the Outdoors Camp call MBA PR Director Stan Rauch at 406-642-6639.*

Just For Teachers

WILD ABOUT BATS

This two-day workshop offered by FWP will focus on the amazing world of bats. Featured speakers include Tom Lemke, FWP Biologist, who conducted research on tropical bats for his Master's and PHD work; Kristi DuBios, FWP Biologist conducting research on bats in Central Montana; Lynnette Adkinson, Education Specialist for Lewis & Clark Caverns; Gene Hickman, bat house contractor; and a public health representative. The class will prove to be an exciting way to kick off the new year, so register early, as space is limited to the first 30 participants. To register contact Lucille in Great Falls at 454-5844. OPI continuing education credits are available for this workshop.

PREDATOR SYMPOSIUM

In cooperation with the Outfitters and Guides Association, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, and several other groups, we will co-sponsor a predator symposium January 8 in Billings. The session will be in conjunction with the Outfitters and Guides' annual convention. Experts in the field will discuss the biology of predators and their relationship with prey, what we do and don't know, legal implications. Contact FWP at 444-4041 for more information.

Aquatic Education Enhancement Program

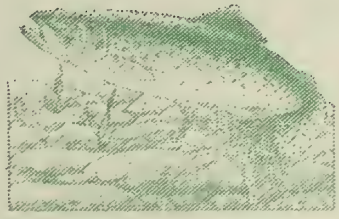
WHAT: Federal Sport Fish Restoration dollars are available to support efforts that involve K-12 students in aquatic education learning projects.

WHEN: Projects must be completed by June 30, 1999.

WHO: Schools, school districts, government agencies & not for profit organizations working to assist schools in aquatic education endeavors are eligible to apply. 3:1 match is required.

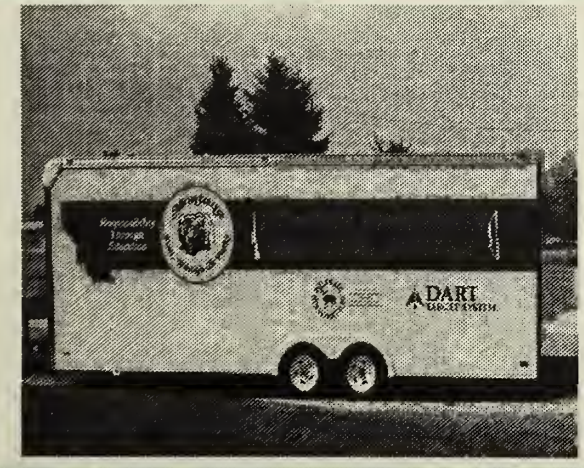
HOW: Potential partners should contact:

Aquatic Education Enhancement Program
MDFWP
Conservation Education Division
PO Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701
406-444-1267



Thank You!

Montana Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation commits financial assistance to Montana's Hunter Education by donating $5,000 for the next three years to support Shooting Center activities. A very special thanks to all you NWTF members for your generous donation.



FWP Shooting Center Schedule

July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000

7/8-7/10	Columbia Falls, Cub Scout Day-Camp
7/13-14	Castle Rock Youth Camp (Big Sky)
7/16-18	Anaconda, Art in the Park
7/22-25	Shelby, Four-County Fair
7/23	Carbon County Fair 4-H
7/29-8/1	Broadwater County Fair
7/29-31	Lewistown, Youth Archery-Fergus County Fair
8/2-8/5	Gt. Falls State Fair
8/4-7	Richland County Fair
8/7-8	Ronan County Fair
8/10-15	Missoula County Fair
8/18-22	Flathead County Fair
8/23-26	Bitterroot Valley Hunter Education (HE)
8/28	Columbia Falls, HE Instructor Training
8/28	Billings, Pheasant Four-Ever, Field Days & Banquet
9/1-5	Ravalli County Fair
9/2-5	Plains, R-1 Hunter Education
9/10-11	Helena, Operator Training
9/13-25	Miles City, Hunter Education Classes
9/13-25	Msla, Lolo, Frenchtown, Patomic & Anaconda Hunter Education Classes
10/7-9	Condon, Community Festival
Jan. 2000	Cascade, Ulm Hunter Education
2/21-26	Bitterroot Valley Hunter Education
3/1-21	Miles City, Hunter Education Spring classes
3/20-31	Msla, Lolo, Frenchtown, Patomic & Anaconda Hunter Education Classes
3/24-26	Billings, MORE Show
4/1	Missoula, Safe Kids Day
4/8-9	Home & Garden Show, Missoula
4/15	Anaconda Hunter Education
5/13-14	Victor Mule Deer Foundation
5/19-21	Conrad, Whoop-Up Days
6/10-11	Drummond Rodeo Days

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232-0913
Mike Backes, Region 7 - Miles City
232-0919

8 CON ED

DART Calendars System Shooting Centers

Montana has two DART System Shooting Centers that have been traveling the state. In an effort to make these excellent training tools available in an equable manner, we have initiated the practice of scheduling events a year in advance. On page 7 in the far right column is the calendar for our budgetary year July 1, 1999-June 30, 2000. We will be taking requests for next budgetary year between now and April 1, 2000.

To submit a proposal, contact any FWP office and ask for a Shooting Center Request form. All proposals will be evaluated, monies allocated and approved events announced by June 1, 2000.

Shooting Range Development Grant Program

In 1990 FWP began this program which has funded 50 projects at 33 locations statewide. All projects are funded on a 50:50 match and must allow hunter education programs at the site. Monies are still available, contact 444-1267 for details.

Below are 1999's successful applicants.

Custer Rod & Gun Club	$8,035.00
Denton Rod & Gun	$8,130.08
Fairfield Trap Club	$7,540.00
Spec Willis Trap Club, Colstrip	$8,900.00
Hamilton Gun Club	$4,218.00
Mission Valley Shooting Club Inc.	$10,850.00
Broadwater Rod & Gun Club	$41,950.00
Loring Trap Club	$5,186.00
Tobacco Valley Rod & Gun	$1,994.80
Eastern Sanders County Sportsmen's Club	$12,900.00
Total	**$109,703.88**